

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 03723 111756Z

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ACTION NODS-00

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1057

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 3723

NODIS/CHEROKEE

FOR EAGLEBURGER FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ASEC, UR, UR, APER

SUBJECT: MOSCOW SIGNAL: EMPLOYEE REACTIONS

REF: STATE 56857

1. I THOROUGHLY SHARE YOUR DEEP CONCERN OVER THE MATTERS MENTIONED IN YOUR MESSAGE, AND YOU HAVE MY TOTAL SUPPORT IN YOUR MOST TRYING EFFORT TO BALANCE OFF THE MANY COMPLEXITIES RELEVANT TO THIS SITUATION. WITH THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO ME UP TO NOW, HOWEVER, I DO NOT FEEL THAT I HAVE CLEAR GROUNDS FOR CONVEYING TO THE STAFF CONCERN REGARDING LACK OF DISCIPLINE IN DEALING WITH THE PRESS. EXCEPT FOR THE INITIAL (FEB. 6) LEAK TO TOTH (WHICH MAY WELL HAVE COME FROM NON-FOREIGN SERVICE SOURCES AND REGARDING WHICH I HAVE MADE CLEAR TO THE STAFF MY CONCERN AND DISAPPOINTMENT), I HAVE NOT DETECTED EVEN INFERENTIAL EVIDENCE OF LEAKS FROM THE EMBASSY STAFF OF FACTS CONVEYED TO THEM ON A CLASSIFIED BASIS. INDEED, VIRTUALLY ALL OF THE ARTICLES ON THIS SUBJECT DURING THE PAST FEW WEEKS HAVE ORIGINATED IN WASHINGTON (SEVERAL STIMULATED BY GEN. GRAHAM'S UNFORTUNATE INTERVIEW), AND A NUMBER OF MATTERS HAVE BEEN RAISED IN THEM UPON WHICH OUR STAFF WAS NOT BRIEFED AND THEREFORE WAS NOT IN A POSITION TO LEAK EVEN IF THEY HAD BEEN SO INCLINED.

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WM WE HAVE, OF COURSE, WELL OVER 200 STAFF MEMBERS AND ADULT

DEPENDENTS, AND THESE COME FROM A VARIETY OF AGENCIES. IT HAS TO BE RECOGNIZED THAT A FEW PERSONS HAVE UNDERSTANDABLE CONCERNS RELATED TO PRIOR MEDICAL CONDITIONS, AND ALSO THAT DEPENDENTS TEND TO BE MOST EXCITABLE. A FEW SEEM TO BE PRIMARILY CONCERNED WITH WHAT THEY CONSIDER TO BE LEGAL ISSUES INVOLVED, AND THIS IS REFLECTED IN SOME OF THE AFSA ACTIVITY.

3. IN OUR PRIOR PLANNING FOR DEALING WITH THE OVERALL PROBLEM, IT WAS ASSUMED BY ALL THAT BRIEFING WOULD INEVITABLY LEAD TO PUBLIC DISCLOSURE. IN RETROSPECT, IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT, IN ATTEMPTING BRIEFING AND NO PUBLICITY, WE IN FACT SOUGHT THE IMPOSSIBLE. UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, I FEEL THAT THE OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF EMBASSY OFFICERS AND STAFF HAS BEEN BETTER THAN WE MIGHT HAVE EXPECTED IN SUCH AN EMOTION-CHARGED ATMOSPHERE, ESPECIALLY WITH DEPENDENTS DIRECTLY INVOLVED. NEEDLESS TO SAY, IF WE GET ANYTHING - OR IF YOU DO - INDICATING THAT SPECIFIC INDIVIDUALS HAVE INDEED BEEN ENGAGING IN UNAUTHORIZED LEAKS, I WILL DEAL WITH THEM IN THE MOST EMPHATIC TERMS.
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